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International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General hereby transmits the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in accordance with General Assembly resolution 63/113.

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I. Introduction

1. In 2008, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) submitted its annual report on its programmes and those of other United Nations entities as regards their adherence to and implementation of the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. In its resolution 63/113, the General Assembly commended UNESCO for recognizing the promotion of a culture of peace as an expression of its fundamental mandate and encouraged it, as the lead agency for the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010, to strengthen further the activities it had undertaken for promoting a culture of peace. The Assembly also requested that the Secretary-General submit a report on the implementation of the resolution to it at its sixty-fourth session.

II. Implementation of the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace

2. As UNESCO has been tasked with coordinating and directly implementing activities in connection with the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010, the present report contains an overview of activities carried out by UNESCO, with the participation of other United Nations entities, Governments and civil society actors. It also contains an overview of activities reported by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as information concerning joint United Nations programmes. Activities are presented in eight sections, corresponding to the eight actions defined in the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

A. Actions to foster a culture of peace through education

3. UNESCO has been working to promote quality education for all as a central vehicle for preparing and instilling the skills and attitudes necessary to defuse and recognize potential conflicts and to actively promote a culture of peace and non-violence, in line with the human rights perspective contained in the Dakar Framework for Action on Education For All. In that regard, technical support and policy advice have been provided to member States to assist them in developing their education systems, curricula, materials and initial and in-service training programmes in order to build the skills needed to build a culture of peace.

4. An example is *Learning to Live Together: an Intercultural and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education*, which was recently published by UNESCO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Arigatou Foundation for educators to teach children about respecting and understanding diverse faiths, religions and ethical beliefs. By helping young people and children to develop ethical decision-making skills and nurturing a sense of belonging, community and values, the programme aims to forge attitudes conducive to building peace through teaching tolerance and mutual understanding. A workshop to present the programme to researchers and practitioners was organized during the June 2009 International Association for Intercultural Education conference held in Athens. Guidelines for

enhancing quality education through textbooks and learning resources have also been published and widely circulated to all member States to support the development and selection of innovative and effective textbooks and other learning resources in order to improve the quality of education in all regions of the world. A meeting of experts was organized in Cairo in June 2009 on the dissemination and implementation of the UNESCO/Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization interregional guidelines for the enhancement of quality learning through textbooks and learning media.

5. UNESCO has also been assisting member States in expanding access to education so as to: ensure that all learners may benefit from quality education, by ensuring that actions at the national level are based on needs of member States that have been identified through processes such as the UNESCO national education support strategy; complement existing national development strategies and plans; and ensure that UNESCO functions in a fully coordinated and complementary manner in line with efforts to achieve coherence within United Nations country teams. Many activities have been implemented in the Asia-Pacific region that are aimed at reorienting teacher education towards achieving quality education, particularly by mainstreaming a rights-based approach and gender equality and integrating education for sustainable development into teacher education. For example, UNESCO's office in Hanoi and the Ministry of Education and Training of Viet Nam participated in the regional project on "Strengthening teacher education to achieve education for all", which analysed policies, teacher-training systems, curricula and manuals to identify gaps in inclusiveness, especially in the promotion of gender equality, human rights and multilingual/mother-tongue-based education. In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNESCO continued to support teacher education through strengthening the leadership network, which is using its Governance and Leadership for Democratic and Peaceful Coexistence in Schools project, and through preparing guidelines to tackle the challenges of teacher training and teaching careers in Brazil. UNESCO also prepared an international course on public policies in teaching in Central America and assisted sub-Saharan African countries with their teacher-training programmes through the Teacher Training Initiative for sub-Saharan Africa.

6. Activities have been implemented that use information and communication technologies as a means for expanding access to quality education, particularly for girls and women, the poor, the marginalized and those with special needs, in a lifelong learning perspective. The use of such technologies for teacher-training initiatives is also being promoted in several regions. In Kazakhstan, national information and communication technology competency standards for teachers were developed and approved. In Cambodia, UNESCO facilitated the development of the "Information and communication technology in education master plan". All these initiatives at the global, regional, national and local levels are now harmonized and coordinated by the Task Force on Teachers for Education For All, endorsed by the Oslo Declaration of the eighth high-level group meeting on education for all. UNESCO also launched an online collaborative knowledge hub for training and capacity-building resources for development, which is a resource directory for agencies, practitioners and stakeholders to access relevant digital learning resources needed for local development and poverty eradication. Work on open educational resources, including the publication *The Way Forward*, provided access to digital

resources and tools, enabling a worldwide community to share and exchange information.

7. Research projects have also been undertaken in collaboration with UNESCO university chairs, universities and research institutes on issues related to access, success and quality education. Outstanding examples of activities to promote peace education have also been rewarded, and best practices on promoting peace and human rights education, democratic citizenship and intercultural and inclusive education, as well as heritage education, have been disseminated through the UNESCO network of associated schools. This year, the Félix Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize was awarded to Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of Brazil, in recognition of his actions in favour of peace and equality of rights and his initiatives to eradicate poverty.

8. UNESCO has also been providing a platform for intellectual exchanges aimed at promoting dialogue and research and developing norms and standards in education. In 2008 and 2009, the Organization held a series of landmark international education conferences on inclusive quality education, education for sustainable development, adult learning and higher education. Those conferences have helped to keep educational issues on the global agenda despite the economic and financial crisis. They included the forty-eighth session of the International Conference on Education, held in November 2008 in Geneva, on "Inclusive education, the way of the future"; the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development: Moving into the Second Half of the United Nations Decade, held in Bonn from 31 March to 2 April 2009; and the World Conference on Higher Education, held at UNESCO in Paris from 5 to 8 July 2009, on "The new dynamics of higher education and research for societal change and development". The conferences offered a unique global opportunity for broad dialogue on educational priorities and provided guidance to policymakers and other stakeholders on paths for transforming education systems. Each conference brought together representatives from UNESCO member States, United Nations entities, multilateral and bilateral cooperation agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector and academia.

9. Information-sharing has also been supported through the convening of expert meetings to bring together key stakeholders to examine issues related to violence in schools, school-related gender violence and corporal punishment. As part of the follow-up by UNESCO to the *World Report on Violence against Children*, in partnership with experts and relevant institutions such as the International Observatory on Violence in Schools, UNESCO has been promoting research, data collection, awareness-raising and advocacy efforts to strengthen and apply legal and political mechanisms to protect the rights of children. It has been leading capacity-building activities in a number of countries at the national level and disseminating and exchanging examples of good practices. Examples of activities include a Caribbean regional workshop on reduction in school violence, held in the Bahamas in February 2008, the world conference on "Violence at school and public policies", organized in June 2008 in Lisbon, and the preparation of the publication *A Guide for Teachers: Stopping Violence in Schools*. UNESCO also organized a high-level forum of ministers from Central America in charge of youth issues. The forum, held in Costa Rica in August 2009, focused on development and violence prevention and contributed to preventing youth violence in the region.

10. Information and communication technologies, such as community radio, newspapers and the Internet, in communities and schools are also being used to promote peace education on issues related to non-violence, tolerance and mutual understanding. For example, the UNESCO offices in Brazil and Uruguay are working with the Brazilian Institute of Applied Technology and Innovation of the hydroelectric energy supplier ITAIPU on a regional-level project called the "Young people movement for non-violence", which aims to foster a culture of non-violence among young people through capacity-building strategies for social and professional integration in a region that sees one of the highest tolls in Latin America of violence and drug abuse among teenagers.

11. WHO has been working with countries to strengthen national capacities to prevent violence through policies and programmes that address the underlying causes and risk factors of violence and thereby reduce the frequency of new acts of violence. The pilot phase of the WHO global mentoring programme for violence and injury prevention, known as MENTOR-VIP, has come to an end, and MENTOR-VIP will start running a programme in September 2009. That programme is designed to match a junior injury prevention practitioner with a more experienced expert, so that the former may develop specific skills through structured collaboration with the latter.

12. The work of WHO in violence prevention capacity development also includes the ongoing dissemination and implementation of TEACH-VIP (Training, Educating and Advancing Collaboration in Health on Violence and Injury Prevention), a modular violence and injury prevention curriculum developed by WHO and a network of global violence and injury prevention experts. That material has been requested by trainers from more than 80 countries across all WHO regions. Successful efforts were made in a number of countries to have the material formally integrated into public health school curricula. It has also been translated into several of the official languages of the United Nations and was used in regional trainings. After extensive revisions, the second edition of TEACH-VIP will be released in 2010. An online version of TEACH-VIP for self-administered learning will be launched at the end of 2009, along with a CD-ROM version. A series of short modular and self-contained courses on violence and injury prevention are being developed and will be available at the end of 2010.

13. In 2008-2009 WHO, in collaboration with the Violence Prevention Alliance, disseminated its new guidance document,[1] which highlights how the health, psychosocial, and economic consequences of violence impede development. It urges development agencies to pay more attention to, and step up their investment in, violence prevention. The guidance document identifies the gaps, and the many strengths, in the current violence-prevention priorities of development agencies and proposes a strengthened agenda for more effective violence prevention.

B. Actions to promote sustainable economic and social development

14. UNESCO has been reaffirming the centrality of education for sustainable economic and social development and crisis recovery and has been stressing the

[1] World Health Organization, *Preventing Violence and Reducing its Impact: How Development Agencies Can Help* (Geneva, 2008).

importance of protecting the most vulnerable. It has been advocating at international forums for increasing investments in education as a response to the global financial crisis and working to generate and maintain political commitment to education within the international community. Recent opportunities included the March 2009 General Assembly thematic debate on access to education in emergencies and preparatory meetings with the Group of Eight (G-8) Education Expert Group, in which UNESCO pressed for a stronger message on the crucial role of the education in development during the G-8 summit in Italy in July 2009. UNESCO also raised awareness of education issues among the public at large through national launches of the 2009 Education for All Global Monitoring Report and this year's Global Action Week (20-26 April 2009), which focused on youth and adult literacy and lifelong learning and was marked by activities mobilizing some 13 million people worldwide.

15. The organization also carried out a survey with its member States, in consultation with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, to analyse and monitor the impact of the financial and economic crisis on education expenditure. The survey will help to identify the likely consequences of the crisis for educational development, especially in the countries that are most challenged in the area of education for all.

16. At the regional level, UNESCO supported the strengthening of many regional networks for education for all. In the Asia-Pacific region, the regional thematic group on education for all was expanded and strengthened; it is linked strategically with existing regional networks. In the Pacific cluster, ministers of education endorsed the Pacific Education Development Framework, linked strategically with the goals of education for all. UNESCO continued to support the regional education project for Latin America and the Caribbean and developed a strategy to monitor policy actions to achieve education for all in the region. In Africa joint planning meetings were held between UNESCO and the four main regional economic communities on the joint implementation of the African Union Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa. South-South and North-South collaboration on and exchanges of effective practices in education for all were enhanced and educational networks among developing countries strengthened, as illustrated by the 10 intercountry collaborative projects on "reaching the unreached" for South-East Asia.

17. At the national level, UNESCO assisted member States in better managing their national education systems and translating a holistic approach to education for all into policy and practice. Countries were assisted in preparing credible national educational plans. UNESCO facilitated the education for all fast-track initiative process to secure funding in Haiti and the Central African Republic and led the partner coordination group in formulating the sector strategy and preparing the fast-track initiative proposal in Cameroon.

18. To promote poverty eradication through sustainable endogenous economic development, UNESCO assisted member States in developing, reformulating and revitalizing their technical and vocational education and training systems. Entrepreneurship training for learners in formal and non-formal education and training programmes has also been promoted.

19. UNESCO has also been advocating for the need to invest in science, innovation and new technologies, including green technologies, in order to stimulate

economic growth while contributing to a sustainable environment and as a means of assisting developing countries in accelerating out of the financial crisis. The organization was a signatory to the United Nations inter-agency statement entitled "Green economy: a transformation to address multiple crises". It has been working with a number of member States, particularly in Africa, to develop scientific policies and to build human and institutional capacities to promote innovation. A number of activities were carried out to enhance capacity in science policy formulation and implementation in Africa and the Arab States. Science, technology and innovation policy review and reformulation meetings were held in Gaborone for 15 Southern African Development Community States and in Mombasa, Kenya, for 11 East and North African countries. UNESCO also launched the African Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Initiative to build capacities in science, technology and innovation policy formulation and to develop such policies at the national level.

20. Within the United Nations "Delivering as one" initiative, UNESCO developed proposals for the reform of the entire science sector in the United Republic of Tanzania, which were then integrated into the workplans of the "One United Nations" joint programmes. Furthermore, the science, technology and innovation system of Albania was reformed, and a new science, technology and innovation strategy for 2009-2015 was adopted and launched in June 2009. A regional plan of action for science and technology for the Arab States was also developed by UNESCO in partnership with the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization.

21. UNESCO has also been assisting member States in fostering policies, in building technical capacity and in promoting research, networking, education and international cooperation in the fields of water and ecological and earth sciences. International conferences and training events on integrated water resource management were organized with key academic and research institutions for developing country practitioners. Dedicated resources and tools were developed, such as the Integrated Water Resources Management Guidelines at River Basin Level, in collaboration with the Government of Japan and other partners, and widely distributed. The organization also participated in the Fifth World Water Forum in Istanbul, Turkey, in March 2009, at which the Director-General launched the third edition of the *United Nations World Water Development Report*.

22. To address the issue of climate change, which will likely have significant economic and social consequences, with an impact on peace, security, stability and development in many regions of the world, UNESCO is assisting member States to build and maintain the requisite knowledge base, to adopt measures for adapting to the impacts of climate change and to contribute to the mitigation of its causes, including through enhanced education and public awareness. UNESCO is also moving towards being a climate-neutral organization. UNESCO, together with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), has been charged with the role of convener for United Nations entities active in the cross-cutting areas of science, assessment, monitoring and early warning.

23. The third World Climate Conference, to be held from 31 August to 4 September 2009 in Geneva, is a major outcome of the convening roles of UNESCO and WMO in the climate science knowledge base. It will be instrumental in achieving United Nations-wide collaboration on a global framework for climate services aimed at delivering climate information to enable national policymakers

and other end users in all sectors of society to adapt to climate change. UNESCO is contributing to the high-level segments and is organizing a scientific working session on the climate of oceans and coasts, forums on gender and climate and on capacity-building, education and training and a side event on groundwater and climate, as well as contributing to the drafting of the final declaration from the Conference. UNESCO also actively participated in overall United Nations climate change efforts led by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and its High-level Committee on Programmes working group on climate change, which are summarized in "Acting on climate change: the United Nations system delivering as one".

24. UNESCO furthered its actions in fostering cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue at the country level, thus illustrating the central role of culture in and for sustainable development. Its involvement in common country programming exercises was strengthened through the inclusion of culture as a pillar of development and as a factor of social cohesion, most notably in a number of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks. UNESCO is currently implementing 18 joint programmes funded under the thematic window on culture and development of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund, UNESCO being the lead agency for 13 of those projects. The first inter-agency meeting of the Fund, held in April 2009, embarked on devising a pilot "culture and development" knowledge management scheme for the system at large.

25. Owing to the emerging need to develop science-based policy responses to address the likely social impacts of the global financial crisis and to promote sustainable development, UNESCO has been involved in organizing a number of high-level events with ministers of social development. For example, an event on "Rethinking social policies in light of the response to the financial crisis" was organized during the World Social Science Forum in May 2009, at which several ministers emphasized the importance of continued investment in social protection and social safety nets and of human rights-based approaches and cooperation among all stakeholders. Likewise, the ninth session of the Intergovernmental Council of the Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme, to be held in September, will analyse national and international social policy responses to the financial crisis, with the participation of ministers of social development, representatives from the United Nations system and regional organizations, researchers, non-governmental organizations and a business representative. Upcoming regional forums of ministers for social development in Latin America (Quito, August 2009) and from the East African Community (Bujumbura, September 2009) will also focus on the crisis and implications for social policies at the regional level.

26. The Armed Violence Prevention Programme is a United Nations multiagency programme that will contribute to a more coherent and evidence-guided approach to armed violence and its prevention. Initiated in 2006 as a collaborative project between UNDP and WHO, phase two of the Programme, which is about to be launched, is a joint initiative between UNDP, UNICEF, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and WHO. Policy development, research and programming in phase two will draw on the comparative advantages of each organization, with a specific focus on ensuring that the impact and unique needs and

experiences of men, women, boys and girls are considered. The first year of phase two will focus on Guatemala, Jamaica and Kenya. The objective of the Armed Violence Prevention Programme is to promote effective armed violence prevention and response founded on a clear understanding of the dynamics and impacts of armed violence and the contexts in which it thrives, as well as best practices generated from violence reduction and prevention initiatives to date. The specific objectives of phase two of the Programme are (a) to promote the development of policy guidance, strategies and effective partnerships on armed violence prevention at the global and regional levels and the integration of armed violence prevention into development cooperation frameworks and mechanisms; (b) to contribute to strengthening national capacities to address armed violence, including through strengthened data collection and monitoring mechanisms, and to formulate and implement evidence-based armed violence prevention policies, strategies and programmes; and (c) to promote a methodologically rigorous approach to, and undertake several evaluations of, violence prevention programmes.

C. Actions to promote respect for all human rights

27. Recognizing that promoting human rights is fundamental to building a culture of peace, UNESCO is aiming to achieve further progress in the implementation of those rights that lie within its fields of competence and to make the standards and principles of international human rights law known and understood as widely as possible. These rights include the right to quality education, the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the right to participate in cultural life, the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and their application, the right to access to safe drinking water and, underpinning all of them, the right to express oneself in one's mother tongue.

28. UNESCO has been actively involved in promoting the right to education through its work to implement the World Programme for Human Rights Education proclaimed by the General Assembly in 2004 (resolution 59/113 A). The Organization advocates for the inclusion of human rights principles and values within the education system and encourages member States to draw up and implement national plans of action for human rights education. The fourth consultation on the implementation of the Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 1974) began in November 2008 in cooperation with all member States. As at July 2009, 34 countries had submitted their reports, on the basis of which a synthesis report will be submitted to the 182nd session of the Executive Board of UNESCO.

29. In follow-up to the forty-eighth session of the International Conference on Education, held in Geneva in November 2008, more emphasis has been placed at the global, regional and country levels on promoting the right to education and assisting countries in developing and implementing inclusive education policies. The organization has developed the UNESCO Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education and is preparing a database of innovative good practices. In Asia and the Pacific, for example, activities addressing those issues showed significant positive results in terms of the development of inclusive education policy frameworks and master plans. UNESCO's support for evidence-based advocacy efforts, aimed at

informing national education policy reform processes, was effective in enhancing the inclusiveness of national education systems, in particular in Afghanistan, Cambodia, China and the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

30. UNESCO has also been involved in an inter-agency initiative with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Council of Europe, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to compile some 100 examples of good practices in human rights education, citizenship education and education for mutual respect and understanding in primary and secondary schools and teacher-training institutions. The publication will be launched in autumn 2009. At the request of OHCHR, UNESCO organized an expert meeting in May 2009 on the right to take part in cultural life. The recommendations contributed to the discussions at the forty-second session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The right to access to safe drinking water and sanitation was further elucidated in an expert meeting organized by UNESCO in cooperation with OHCHR in Paris in July 2009. The right to express oneself in one's own mother tongue was promoted through the dedicated intersectoral platform on languages and multilingualism, which brings together all major programmes of the organization and focuses on the role of languages and multilingualism in their human and cultural dimensions and in contributing to sustainable development, social cohesion and peace. Information regarding the activities of UNESCO to promote freedom of expression is outlined in section G below. In addition, the International Centre for the Advancement of Human Rights was established in Buenos Aires under the auspices of UNESCO.

31. As part of its ongoing Global Campaign for Violence Prevention, WHO convened the annual meeting of the Violence Prevention Alliance in December 2008. The three main achievements of the meeting were the development of a strategy to generate political priority for violence prevention, the preparation of a plan for Alliance participants to raise violence prevention on the agendas of official development assistance (ODA) agencies and the adoption of two new priorities for Alliance work in 2009-2012 (strengthening intersectoral collaboration for violence prevention, starting with enhanced public health and criminal justice/policing collaboration, and enhancing national and local violence prevention capacity). In September 2009, the fourth Milestones of a Global Campaign for Violence Prevention meeting will take place at WHO headquarters in Geneva. The theme of the meeting is "Boosting global violence prevention". The meeting is aimed at substantially increasing action, political support and funding for violence prevention worldwide. It is expected to bring together representatives of ODA agencies, United Nations entities and large non-governmental organizations to find ways to step up support for violence prevention. The meeting is to include ministers of health and ministers from other sectors as keynote speakers and presenters. Of the 150 participants who are expected to attend, many will be policymakers, high-level planners and others with decision-making authority at the local, national and international levels.

D. Actions to ensure equality between women and men

32. In accordance with the new medium-term strategy for 2008-2013, which has designated gender equality as one of two global priorities of the organization, UNESCO has been giving priority to the pursuit of gender equality through action in

all of UNESCO's fields of competence by pursuing both gender-specific programming and gender mainstreaming in member States and within the organization. A practical and results-based Priority Gender Equality Action Plan for 2008-2013 was endorsed by the Executive Board of UNESCO at its 181st session. It describes the actions that UNESCO's programme sectors will pursue between 2008 and 2013 to contribute to the pursuit of the empowerment of women and gender equality. The organization is also supporting those objectives in member States by: (a) mainstreaming gender equality issues throughout the programming cycle at all programme levels; (b) building commitment, competence and capacity for gender mainstreaming through dedicated capacity development and resources for those purposes; (c) in the secretariat, supporting equal career opportunities for staff and appropriate working arrangements to balance work and life; and (d) progressively increasing the representation of women at decision-making levels within the secretariat to 50 per cent by 2015.

33. With regard to the capacity development and training programme in gender mainstreaming, four programme sectors and a majority of field office staff have received training to date. Special training and coaching have been provided to UNESCO's Iraq programme staff based in Amman and staff from the UNESCO office in Amman to ensure gender mainstreaming in conflict and post-conflict contexts. Capacity development and training in gender mainstreaming was also furthered by the development of interactive, online training programmes, and advanced in-person training for selected staff in headquarters and field offices. More attention was brought to the importance of promoting the empowerment of women and gender equality through the organization of four seminars as part of the UNESCO Forum on Gender Equality.

34. UNESCO has been promoting the empowerment of women, the rights of women and gender equality as a priority objective throughout all United Nations joint programmes. It is a lead player in the joint programme on gender equality between the United Nations and the Government of Viet Nam and promotes gender equality at the country level by integrating gender equality components into all UNESCO country programming documents. The organization participates in 4 of the 13 proposals retained under the thematic window on gender equality of the UNDP-Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund. UNESCO collaborates with the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, and is co-manager of that Network's task force on gender and climate change. It also collaborated with UNDP and the International Union for Conservation of Nature for the development of the first-ever Training Manual on Gender and Climate Change and is the lead agency in the gender forum at the third World Climate Conference. It is also involved in other task forces on tracking investments in gender equality in United Nations agencies and on the development of a system-wide gender equality action plan as well as the United Nations Development Group task team on gender equality.

35. UNESCO strongly supports the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted in 1979 by the General Assembly (resolution 34/180, annex) by:

(a) Widely distributing the "passport to equality", which contains the articles of the Convention, to member States;

(b) Using sex disaggregated data and gender analysis to reveal how policies have different impacts on women and men, but also inviting women to share their own experiences;

(c) Forging and strengthening the political will to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women, particularly through two new initiatives: (i) the UNESCO and Sony Ericsson Women's Tennis Association Tour global partnership to further gender equality and pro. ıote women's leadership in all spheres of society, as a part of which the tennis players Venus Williams (United States of America), Tatiana Golovin (France) and Jie Zheng (China) were appointed "promoters of gender equality", resulting in a first round of projects supporting women's leadership in Cameroon, China, the Dominican Republic, Jordan and Liberia; and (ii) the "Group of women ambassadors to UNESCO for gender equality", to promote the empowerment of women and gender equality, both within the organization and in member States;

(d) Promoting the participation of women in scientific research through the UNESCO/L'Oreal Partnership for Women in Science.

E. Actions to foster democratic participation

36. UNESCO has been working to instil democratic values in all learners as an integrated component in its work to provide quality education at all educational levels through both formal and non-formal education. Democratic governance and citizenship participation in developing countries, particularly those in post-conflict situations, have also been promoted by UNESCO through training journalists and media professionals in non-partisan and independent reporting techniques in conflict areas; supporting the establishment of the necessary conditions for independent media by providing expertise to national authorities seeking to adapt their media legislation to internationally recognized standards of freedom of expression, peace and tolerance; and assisting the media in covering elections. In line with the UNESCO integrated strategy on democracy, the International Centre for Human Sciences contributed to promoting the human sciences, namely through fostering comparative analytical research, organizing international dialogues on the future of democracy and supporting democracy in post-conflict areas. The Centre organized a seminar on "Democracy: new challenges, new approaches" in May 2009 and a workshop with non-governmental organizations in July 2009. In addition, the new Permanent Forum of Arab-African Dialogue on Democracy and Human Rights held the first meeting of its Steering Committee in May 2009 to discuss the orientation, structure and functioning of the Forum. The mission of the Forum is to provide a space for ongoing dialogue between the two regions and among the various institutions involved in implementing policies and strategies relating to human rights.

F. Actions to advance understanding, tolerance and solidarity

37. UNESCO has been contributing to peace, mutual understanding and social cohesion through the promotion of a dialogue among civilizations and cultures in accordance with the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations and its Programme of Action proclaimed by the General Assembly in 2001 (resolution

56/6). It has been drawing on relevant recommendations of the report of the Alliance of Civilizations and implementing activities that focus on youth, women, civil society, the media, educators and education to avoid discrimination against migrants. To strengthen action in the area of dialogue, UNESCO has established an intersectoral platform on "Contributing to the dialogue among civilizations and cultures and a culture of peace", in order to address that global challenge through an interdisciplinary approach.

38. To further an integrated approach to education based on cooperation and dialogue, UNESCO organized the Copenhagen Conference on "Education for intercultural understanding and dialogue" in October 2008. The outcomes of the Conference focused on the development of special platforms for cooperation across cultural boundaries, with a particular focus on young people as key agents of change.

39. UNESCO has also been supporting dialogue through the Greater Horn Horizon Forum, the objective of which is to encourage dialogue among intellectuals in the countries of the Horn of Africa and in the diaspora and to contribute to the development of mutually accepted solutions to the problems of the region. The Forum is composed principally of academics and civil society actors who, through their multidisciplinary research, support the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Governments in the region in developing their responses to present and future challenges. The main objective is to reinforce the link between researchers and policymakers so as to support the development of policies that promote peace and sustainable development and respect human rights.

40. In order to build sustainable bridges for dialogue, UNESCO has been working with its member States to revise textbooks and curricula to help ensure the removal of hate messages, distortions, prejudice and negative bias from textbooks and other educational media and to ensure basic knowledge and understanding of the main cultures, civilizations and religions of the world. The completion of the *History of Humanity* and the *General History of Latin America* concludes the long-term programme of UNESCO histories, which has involved the intellectual cooperation of more than 1,800 eminent specialists from all regions of the world. The project for the pedagogical use of the *General History of Africa* was also completed. Cooperation with national commissions has enabled the project on "The image of the other in Arabo-Islamic and European textbooks" to be implemented. Activities to strengthen the fight against cultural, ethnic and religious prejudice were also pursued, in particular through the revitalization of the Slave Route Project, which contributes to a better understanding of the causes, forms of operation, issues and consequences of slavery in the world (Africa, Europe, the Americas, the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, the Middle East and Asia).

41. The promotion of cultural diversity is inseparable from the encouragement of dialogue if harmonious social interaction is to be facilitated within and among cultures in furtherance of peace locally and internationally. Thus, UNESCO has been working to advocate for the ratification of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. The number of parties to the Convention increased to 99, with 21 new ratifications. A fund-raising strategy for the International Fund for Cultural Diversity and a new strategy for the Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity were also devised.

42. UNESCO has also been promoting the sharing of common values pertaining to specific scientific disciplines in different cultural settings through such mechanisms as the From Potential Conflict to Cooperation Potential initiative. The initiative facilitates multilevel and interdisciplinary dialogues in order to foster peace, cooperation and development related to the management of shared water resources.

43. Efforts have been made to assist free, independent and pluralistic media by working with associations of professional journalists to prevent conflict and promote mutual understanding, notably through the creation of cross-cultural networks, the development of ethical and professional approaches to reporting and training and awareness-raising for media professionals so as to promote an enabling environment for free self-expression. For example, the Power of Peace Network, a simulated broadcast and Internet innovation, is harnessing the power of communication and information technologies for mutual understanding and peace.

44. Issues of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation have been central to ILO activities in post-conflict responses. For example, the majority of demobilized ex-combatants often face challenges in finding job opportunities owing to the stigma attached to them. ILO has continued to provide technical advice and backstopping for the socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants and other war-affected populations. At the inter-agency level, ILO has been actively involved in the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of ex-combatants, which consists of 17 United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes and the International Organization for Migration. ILO has taken the lead to develop and revise international standards on the reintegration of ex-combatants. At the country level, ILO provided entrepreneurship skills training for about 5,000 ex-combatants in Liberia in early 2009. Through these activities, equality and discrimination issues in employment for ex-combatants and other specific-needs groups, such as persons with disabilities, youth, women and children formerly associated with armed forces and groups, have been increasingly attended to in post-conflict reconstruction activities.

G. Actions to support participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge

45. UNESCO increased awareness about freedom of expression through the worldwide celebrations for World Press Freedom Day (3 May) and international conferences on "Freedom of expression, access to information and empowerment of people" in Maputo in 2008 and on "Potential of media: dialogue, mutual understanding and reconciliation" in Doha in 2009. The award of the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize gave high visibility to the efforts of UNESCO. This was amplified through the organization of an international high-level symposium on freedom of expression and an accompanying exhibition in Paris in October 2008. Awareness-raising efforts resulted in the recognition of the important role that a free media plays in development, democracy and dialogue — in the Accra Agenda for Action and in the outcome document of the meeting on media and development held jointly by the African Union and the European Commission in September 2008 in Ouagadougou.

46. Freedom of the press training also enabled journalists to apply internationally recognized legal, ethical and professional standards to their work. Local institutional

capacity in creating legal frameworks and regulatory and policy conditions conducive to such fundamental freedoms was also strengthened. This includes the promotion of traditional and new media as a platform for dialogue and enhancing democratic governance.

47. UNESCO has been fostering universal access to information by assisting in the formulation of national information policy frameworks, in particular within the framework of the Information for All Programme; supporting the preservation of analogue and digital documentary information through the Memory of the World Programme; establishing policy frameworks and international standards to increase information literacy; monitoring developments and fostering the exchange of best practices with regard to the ethical dimensions of the information society, building on the priorities of the Information for All Programme; fostering international partnerships for enhancing universal access to information; and encouraging the development of knowledge societies.

48. The development of free, independent and pluralistic media is being promoted through UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication and by building the capacities of media professionals through enhancing the quality of media training institutions, as well as by fostering community access to information to increase opportunities for non-formal education and inclusive participation in development and in management of social transformations.

49. To facilitate community access to information, UNESCO has been supporting community multimedia centres, which combine traditional local media, such as newspapers, radio and TV, with new technologies, such as computers, the Internet and digital devices. Community multimedia centres have been introduced in 34 countries, 19 of them in Africa.

H. Actions to promote international peace and security

50. UNESCO has also developed an intersectoral platform in order to strengthen its efforts to assist countries in post-conflict and post-disaster situations in all of its programme areas (education, the sciences, culture, communication and information). It provides expertise and advice in conflict resolution applied to natural resource management and to the integration of disaster prevention and mitigation efforts, in particular early warning systems, into post-conflict and disaster responses; supports the revitalization of in-country research facilities, policy formulation, implementation and monitoring in the various fields of the natural, social and human sciences; protects damaged cultural and natural heritage, including through the emergency consolidation and rehabilitation of damaged cultural heritage sites and institutions and the safeguarding of endangered intangible cultural heritage; strengthens the role of communication and information in fostering mutual understanding, peacebuilding and reconstruction; and promotes the development of institutional and human capacities for the development of sustained free and independent and pluralistic media. UNESCO has participated in post-conflict and post-disaster responses coordinated by the United Nations in Afghanistan, in China following the Sichuan earthquake, in Cuba and Haiti following hurricanes, as part of the reconstruction of Iraq, in Myanmar following Cyclone Nargis, following floods in Namibia and in Pakistan. Eight UNESCO field offices are involved in the conflict

resolution and peacebuilding thematic window of the UNDP-Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund.

51. UNESCO has also been working in favour of the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on "women and peace and security". It promoted the involvement of women in peace and security at the institutional level in post-conflict countries through the establishment of women's research and documentation centres, and it has been cooperating with the Bethlehem Peace Centre, which endeavours to bring together Palestinian and Israeli women to engage in intercultural and interreligious dialogue.

52. To promote international peace and security by furthering efforts to engage multi-stakeholders in the dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, UNESCO consulted with a broad range of partners and organizations to identify possibilities for joint action and partnerships. UNESCO has pledged to promote dialogue among political leaders in countries of South-Eastern Europe as they work to create a common vision of the future that is based on international cooperation. It assisted with the organization of a series of regional meetings in Ohrid, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2003), Tirana (2004), Varna, Bulgaria (2005), Opatija, Croatia (2006), Bucharest (2007) and Athens (2008). In Athens, Heads of State and other leaders from the South-Eastern European region adopted the Athens Declaration, which emphasizes the role of cultural routes, itineraries and corridors as platforms for regional cooperation and foresees the development of a pool of joint projects on cultural water routes as a means to contribute to stability and peace in the region. This will build upon the work of UNESCO to develop the "cultural corridors" initiative in South-Eastern Europe.

53. UNESCO also participates in the development of the Secretary-General's counter-terrorism strategy within the framework of the inter-agency Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy designated a key role for UNESCO in its plan of action, which referred to the promotion of dialogue and the prevention of the defamation of religious beliefs and to the promotion of a culture of peace, justice and human development through interfaith dialogue among civilizations.

III. Role of civil society

54. UNESCO is encouraging civil society to strengthen its efforts to promote a culture of peace through various programmes and initiatives, such as the "Civil societies in dialogue: Israel/Palestine" programme, which aims to help leaders of civil society organizations build a common future through dialogue and policy-oriented research. Through that programme, UNESCO aims to contribute to establishing a constructive dialogue between the two societies, which is an essential prerequisite for sustainable peace. It has strongly encouraged the creation of a permanent forum of dialogue between Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories and promoted active collaboration among researchers and universities. Under the programme, several studies have been carried out, resulting in the publication of three books prepared jointly by Israeli and Palestinian teams.

55. The culture of peace was also promoted among youth through the 2009 international essay contest for young people that was organized with the Goi Peace Foundation. The theme of this year's contest was "the role of science in building a

better world". Young people from around the world were invited to submit their innovative ideas on that theme. Winners will be announced in November 2009. First-prize winners will be invited to the award ceremony to be held in Tokyo in November.

56. International public-private partnerships for young people were also implemented in Côte d'Ivoire, Guatemala and the occupied Palestinian territories that aim at empowering disadvantaged youth in conflict and post-conflict situations through improved access to, and use of, information and communication technologies and web-based social networking tools. Space and tools were provided for youth to express themselves, share their views and opinions and overcome mobility restrictions. Community youth-oriented initiatives were developed, based on strategies for youth to access information and knowledge related to development and peace through traditional and new media. UNESCO also continued the public-private partnership with Daimler to support the Mondialogo initiative, which promotes intercultural dialogue on sustainable development issues through its school contest, engineering award and intercultural Internet portal.

57. UNESCO's network of national commissions has been facilitating contact and promoting interaction between member States and the intellectual and professional communities in each country in order to forge alliances and to extend the outreach of UNESCO in each member State. The national commissions have been significantly contributing to the pursuit of the objectives of the organization and the conceptualization, implementation and delivery of its programmes at the regional, subregional and national levels.

IV. Communication and networking arrangements

58. In order to raise awareness about the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010, UNESCO continued to distribute the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace and to provide information on the activities of UNESCO to promote a culture of peace to all interested parties. Updates on the activities of UNESCO and those of other organizations working to promote a culture of peace were provided on the culture of peace website that was established during the International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000).

V. Recommendations

59. **United Nations agencies, funds and programmes are encouraged to continue focusing their programmes on the various dimensions of the culture of peace, especially at the country level.**

60. **Member States, for their part, are encouraged to:**

(a) **Ensure that funding quality education for all is a top priority and that the financial crisis does not serve as a justification for a reduction in the allocation of resources to education at both the national and international levels;**

(b) **Increase investments in science and technology, especially green technologies, in order to promote a green economy;**

(c) **Strengthen education for sustainable development, lifelong learning for all and equal access of all levels of society to learning opportunities so as to implement the principles of inclusive education;**

(d) **Review and revise educational and cultural policies to reflect a human rights-based approach, cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and sustainable development;**

(e) **Strengthen efforts to remove hate messages, distortions, prejudice and negative bias from textbooks and other educational media and to ensure basic knowledge and understanding of the world's main cultures, civilizations and religions;**

(f) **Promote school cultures and environments that are child-friendly, conducive to effective learning, inclusive of all children, healthy, protective and gender-responsive and encourage the active role and the participation of the learners themselves, their families and their communities;**

(g) **Expand access to information and communication technologies to bring the benefits of all levels and means of education to girls and women, the excluded, the poor, the marginalized and those with special needs in a lifelong perspective.**